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Spanish, the rebels kept themselves fully informed of all Spanish activity. Never lacking information, the Indians always had a precise idea of Spanish strength or weakness. There was seldom a rigid military perimeter; in those areas where the invader could maintain a fort and military supremacy the Indians were reduced to servitude. With a weakening of Spanish strength, rebellion inevitably occurred, so that the distinction as a peaceful or warlike Indian depended largely upon the state of affairs of the moment. Because the Indians so frequently changed roles, they were never out of personal contact with the Spanish.

The Indians received some aid and encouragement from Spanish deserters. There is no telling how many deserted to enemy ranks in the course of the sixteenth century, but in the year 1600 alone it is known that there were over sixty desertions.[14] A good many of these renegades were still living among the Indians in 1607.[15] In fear of peace and subsequent retribution, the traitors taught the Indians many things that would have been difficult for them to learn themselves, such as the proper use of firearms, building of forges and ironmongering, and even the techniques of political administration. The Spaniards were greatly perturbed when a mestizo powder-maker went over to the other side. With volcanic sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal in abundance, the Indians could make deadly use of the large stores of field pieces and firearms which they had captured. As luck would have it, the deserter repented and returned to the Spanish fold, whereupon he was forgiven and permitted to return to Peru. There were also clerical renegades who apostatized and urged the Indians on in their own religious beliefs and practices.[16]

It is most important to understand that the motive for Araucanian observation of Spanish cultural forms was not to emulate them and thereby raise the level of their own, but to discover Spanish weaknesses and to mobilize Araucanian strength for forceful opposition. A fundamental weakness of Spanish occupation was its dire need of peace. Exploitation of this weakness became a cornerstone of Araucanian strategy throughout the sixteenth century and beyond. Spanish forces, both civilian and military, were too few and too widely dispersed, and the line of supply from Peru was much too long. Effective occupation and permanent settlement depended upon a guaranteed supply of Indian labor. This, of course, was in turn dependent upon total pacification, which would allow the colonists to concentrate on development of mining and agriculture rather than military defense. As experience in Mexico and Peru had shown, a mere handful of soldiers,

14 Encina, vol. 2, p. 306.

15 Nájera, p. 117.

16 *Idem*, pp. 117-122, 143-148, 69-73-75. In spite of Spanish fears, firearms did not play a significant role in Indian strategy until late in the seventeenth century.

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of peace in war council, could be cut down on the spot by the nearest soldier. Apparently it was quite common for the warriors to kill any Indian who spoke of peace, or who was suspected of having the word in his mouth. Nájera describes a rigorous "inquisition" by the warriors to suppress the minority who wanted to farm rather than fight. Christianity was also forbidden. In the course of time many Indians were introduced to its tenets through close contact with the Spanish, especially the Indians who lived around the Spanish settlements. After the disaster of 1598, of course, the towns were no more. Many of the Indians had become reconciled to Spanish occupation and were genuinely converted to Christianity. Now they were exposed to the mercy of the estado's inquisitors. From what we know, it did not go well with them.[49] Standing in opposition to Christianity was an apparently well-defined Araucanian concept, to wit: the Indian way of life is the only one; those who die in war against the Spanish go to another land where they enjoy more women and luxuries than they ever had in this life; there is nothing to fear in death.[50]

Araucanian opposition to Spanish intrusion was not confined to the field of battle. At all times they waged psychological warfare with consummate skill. While they always celebrated a victory over the Spaniards, and let the settlers know of their celebration, they never disclosed the identity of the fort or community that had fallen.[51] With great finesse they obstructed Spanish intelligence, keeping the enemy in a state of worried ignorance. It is relatively certain that human flesh was not eaten by the Araucanians in pre-Hispanic times except in times of dire necessity.[52] With the advent of the Spanish invasion, however, the eating of Spaniards became institutionalized. Time and time again the chroniclers tell of Spaniards being eaten, in whole and in part, and sometimes, their horses with them. Since there does not appear to have been a tradition to support this practice, nor any magical or superstitious belief connected with the act, it seems reasonable to assume that it was developed for its propaganda value. This would represent an intended clash of values. Discovering the abhorrence with which the Christians viewed cannibalism, the Araucanians appear to have developed it as a cultural opposite, a symbol of resistance. The great chief of Arauco, Caupolican, in hurling a challenge at Governor García Hurtado de Mendoza, boasted that

49 *Idem*, pp. 100, 119, 60, 163, 70; "Tratado de la importancia y utilidad que ay en dar por esclavos a los indios rebelados de Chile," 1599 (José Toribio Medina, *Biblioteca hispano-chilena, 1523-1817*, 3 vols., Santiago, 1897-99), vol. 2, p. 13.

50 Olaverría, p. 40.

51 Nájera, pp. 75-76, 98, 100.

52 See Cooper, p. 732 and José Toribio Medina, *Los aborígines de Chile* (Santiago, 1952), pp. 220-221. Marmolejo (p. 57) states that in the spring of 1536 the Indians were visited by a terrible plague (called *chavalongo*). In the aftermath of famine the Indians turned to cannibalism as a means of survival.